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Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 22 December 2015

[*on the report of the Second Committee (A/70/472/Add.5)*]

70/206. Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 69/221 of 19 December 2014, as well as other resolutions relating to the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa,[1]

Recalling also its request, in its resolution 69/221, that the Secretary-General submit to the General Assembly at its seventy-fifth session a report on the implementation of the United Nations Decade for Deserts and the Fight against Desertification (2010–2020),

Recalling further that the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development recognized the need for urgent action to reverse land degradation and, in view of this, for striving to achieve a land-degradation-neutral world in the context of sustainable development,

Reaffirming its resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015, entitled "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", in which it adopted a comprehensive, far-reaching and people-centred set of universal and transformative Sustainable Development Goals and targets, its commitment to working tirelessly for the full implementation of this Agenda by 2030, its recognition that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development, its commitment to achieving sustainable development in its three dimensions — economic, social and environmental — in a balanced and integrated manner, and to building upon the achievements of the Millennium Development Goals and seeking to address their unfinished business,

Recalling that, in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the international community should combat desertification, restore degraded land and

[1] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1954, No. 33480.

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soil, including land affected by desertification, drought and floods, and strive to achieve a land-degradation-neutral world by 2030,

Noting that, in striving to achieve target 15.3 of Goal 15 of the Sustainable Development Goals, it is also important to address wider elements of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including ending poverty and hunger, tackling inequality, empowering women and stimulating economic growth,

Reaffirming its resolution 69/313 of 27 July 2015 on the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, which is an integral part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, supports and complements it, helps to contextualize its means of implementation targets with concrete policies and actions, and reaffirms the strong political commitment to address the challenge of financing and creating an enabling environment at all levels for sustainable development in the spirit of global partnership and solidarity,

Noting in this regard that combating desertification, land degradation and drought, including through sustainable land management, can contribute to easing forced migration flows influenced by a number of factors, including economic, social, security and environmental concerns, which can, in turn, reduce current and potential fighting over resources in degraded areas,

Recognizing that land degradation increases the risk of hunger and undernutrition and poses serious threats to human societies, ecosystems and peace and stability,

Acknowledging that striving to achieve land degradation neutrality would significantly contribute to the three dimensions of sustainable development through the rehabilitation, restoration, conservation and sustainable management of land resources, and that this could potentially involve the development of voluntary national targets,

Noting that desertification, land degradation, drought and climate change are closely related and that, if not addressed, they would pose a serious challenge to sustainable development for all countries, in particular developing countries,

Noting also that a significant proportion of land degradation occurs beyond arid, semi-arid and dry subhumid areas,

Expressing its deep appreciation and gratitude to the Government of Turkey for hosting the twelfth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, held in Ankara from 12 to 23 October 2015,

Concerned by extreme weather phenomena and their devastating consequences, especially in arid, semi-arid and dry subhumid regions, including recurrent and long spells of drought, flooding and increasing frequency and severity of dust storms and sandstorms, and their negative impact on the environment and the economy,

Emphasizing the need to promote sustainable land management, sustainable forest management and the restoration of degraded lands in order to combat desertification, land degradation and drought,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa;[2]

2. *Welcomes* the outcomes of the twelfth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa;

3. *Encourages* developed countries party to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa,[1] to actively support the efforts of developing countries party to the Convention in promoting sustainable land management practices and in seeking to achieve land degradation neutrality, by providing substantial financial resources, facilitated access to appropriate technology and other forms of support, including through capacity-building measures;

4. *Also encourages* developed countries party to the Convention, and invites other countries in a position to do so, multilateral financial institutions, the private sector, civil society organizations and technical and financial institutions, to:

(*a*) Provide scientific, technical and financial assistance to help affected countries party to the Convention requesting assistance to set and achieve voluntary land degradation neutrality targets and to implement sustainable land management practices and land degradation neutrality initiatives;

(*b*) Establish equitable partnerships that encourage responsible and sustainable investments and practices by the private sector, which contribute to achieving land degradation neutrality that supports the health and productivity of the land and its people;

5. *Invites* parties affected by desertification, land degradation and drought to scale up their efforts, using available internal and external resources, for the implementation of their national action programmes, as appropriate;

6. *Reiterates* that the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development reaffirmed women's vital role and their full and equal participation and leadership in all areas of sustainable development, and in this regard invites donors and international organizations, including the organizations of the United Nations system, as well as the international financial institutions, regional banks and major groups, including the private sector, to fully integrate their commitments and their considerations on gender equality and women's empowerment and to ensure the participation of women and effective gender mainstreaming in their decision-making in combating desertification, land degradation and drought;

7. *Requests* the secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, and appropriate bodies of the Convention, within the scope of the Convention, to improve the effectiveness of collaboration with the secretariats of the other Rio conventions and other partners at the national and, as appropriate, subnational levels to support the implementation, monitoring and follow-up of voluntary land degradation neutrality targets and initiatives;

[2] A/70/230, sect. II.

8. *Invites* the secretariat of the Convention to take the initiative and invite other relevant agencies and stakeholders, such as United Nations agencies, international organizations, financial institutions, civil society organizations and the private sector, to seek cooperation to achieve target 15.3 of Goal 15 of the Sustainable Development Goals;

9. *Reiterates* that degraded land, if recovered, would, inter alia, contribute to restoring natural resources, thus potentially improving food security and nutrition in the affected countries and, in the process, could, inter alia, contribute to the absorption of carbon emissions;

10. *Decides* to include, in the United Nations calendar of conferences and meetings for the biennium 2016–2017, the sessions of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention and its subsidiary bodies envisaged for the biennium, and requests the Secretary-General to make provisions for the sessions of the Conference of the Parties and its subsidiary bodies in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016–2017;

11. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its seventy-first session a report on the implementation of the present resolution, and decides to include, under the item entitled "Sustainable development", the sub-item entitled "Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa" in the provisional agenda of its seventy-first session, unless otherwise agreed in the discussions on the revitalization of the Second Committee.

81st plenary meeting
22 December 2015